



# Email Delivery Guide

Using Engagement Principles to Get Your Emails to the Inbox





# What's Inside

The Journey of an Email.....4

Engagement Strategies for Improving Email Delivery.....5

    Clean Up Your Email Database.....6

    Refine Your Email Properties.....7

    Optimise Email Composition.....8

    Test Your Emails.....9

List Hygiene Tasks that Everlytic Does Automatically.....10

Conclusion.....11

## Get Best-in-Market Email Delivery with Everlytic

Everlytic is a digital messaging platform that helps your business communicate personally, reliably, and automatically using bulk email, SMS, voice broadcasting, and push notifications – at scale.

Use the software to:

- ✓ Grow and manage your database
- ✓ Build engaging communication campaigns
- ✓ Automate your communication journeys
- ✓ Enjoy leading email delivery rates
- ✓ Monitor engagement and performance

Find out More



A woman with dark, curly hair is shown in profile, looking down at a laptop. She is wearing a white blouse. The background is blurred, showing an office environment with a desk and some papers.

# Introduction

When sending marketing emails, achieving and maintaining a high delivery rate is often more complicated than it seems. For instance, from the moment you hit send to the moment an email arrives in the recipient's inbox, it goes through a complex series of checks to ensure it's legitimate. And sometimes, even the most honest emails get stuck along the way.

In this guide, we'll walk you through some of the actions you can take in your email creation to decrease your emails' chances of being marked as spam and improve its delivery.

# The Journey of an Email

Email doesn't travel straight from your server to a recipient. It goes through several checks and filters in between. And they can be different for every email service provider. Usually, these checks include:

## 2 The SMTP 'Handshake'

For every email address you send to (e.g.: marketing@everlytic.com), you initiate an SMTP (Simple Mail Transfer Protocol) 'handshake'. This is where the SMTP server recognises the domain you're sending to (e.g.: everlytic.com), contacts the receiving server responsible for accepting messages for that domain, and they exchange multiple pieces of information.

## 3 Determining Factors of Delivery

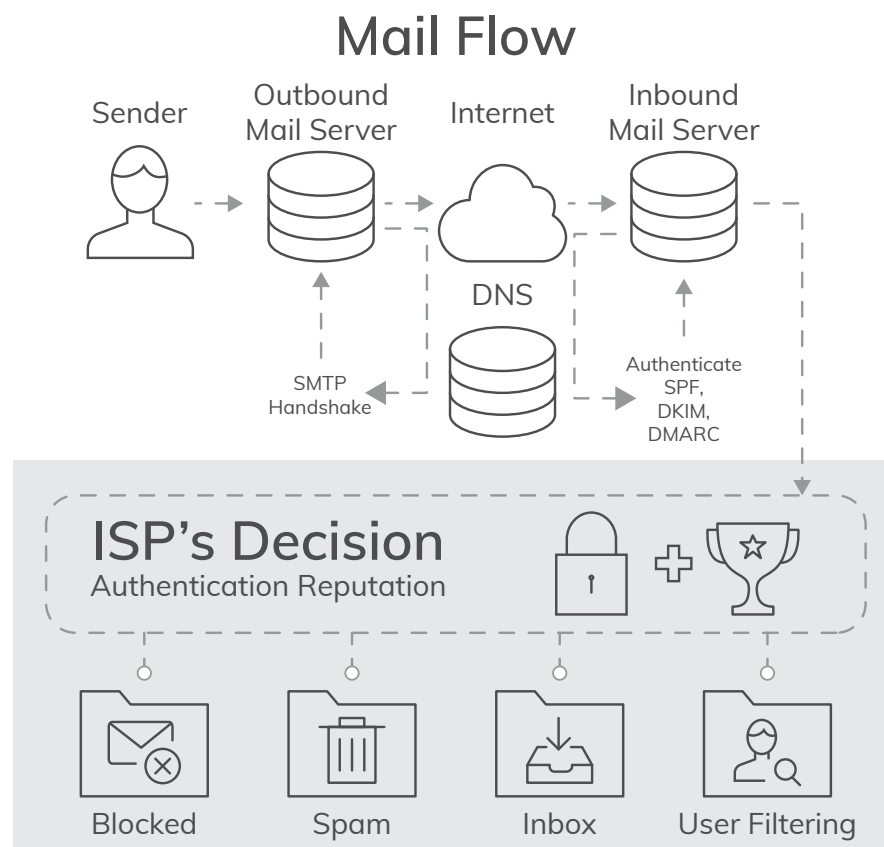
- **DNS:** The DNS (Domain Name System) is like the phone book of the internet. The receiving server checks it to find out who the sender is (takes place in the SMTP handshake).
- **Authentication:** Security checks, like SPF, DKIM, and DMARC.
- **Reputation:** Blacklist, volume, integrity, and accreditation with an email deliverability service provider.
- **Content:** Images, text, subject, and links.

If your email passes these checks, it'll be sent to your subscriber's mailbox. If the recipient's email client determines that it looks suspicious, but isn't obviously spam, it may be filtered to your recipients' junk or trash boxes. And if it decides that your email is too much like spam, it'll probably get quarantined or blocked.

Align your domain's SPF and DKIM records with your sending servers to immediately prove the authenticity of your mailers and directly improve your email delivery.

As an Everlytic client, we can help you with this.

[Find out More](#)





# Engagement Strategies for Improving Email Delivery

The technical work Everlytic does helps you to get your email into your subscriber's inboxes. But, as you can see from the email journey, that's just part of the picture. Let's explore what else you can do to improve delivery rates.



# Clean Up Your Database

Email clients calculate how many of your subscribers open your emails, click links within your emails, unsubscribe, or are inactive. If you constantly send to contacts who don't want to receive - and complain about - your email, your sender reputation may decrease to the point where your emails are automatically marked as junk, or worse: blacklisted.

This is why it's so important to practise good email subscriber list hygiene. Remove invalid and duplicate email addresses and switch off any unengaged contacts.

Factors that often cause bad data are:

- ✗ Duplicate records,
- ✗ Stale data,
- ✗ Improper data collection methods, and
- ✗ Role-based email addresses (e.g. info@, marketing@, support@, webmaster@, etc).

Data errors can creep into your mailing lists at any stage of a list-building campaign. Clean your data on a quarterly basis to be safe.



# Refine Your Email Properties

The content of your emails helps build trust with your recipients, which increases open and engagement rates; factors that have a direct impact on deliverability.

The first thing that subscribers see from your emails are the email properties (like the subject line, from name, and from address). These tell subscribers and receiving servers who the email is from and what the content is about. You may be surprised by how a few adjustments to these can impact your delivery.

## Subject Lines

This is one of the first things your subscribers see before opening your message. Use subject lines that:

- Explain the focus of the email
- Are short and enticing
- Are personalised and relevant to the reader
- Create a sense of urgency
- Offer something of value to the reader
- Include an emoji (if it suits your brand)

## Preview Text

Some email clients have a built-in preview pane (separate to the subject line) showing readers an intro to the email – and in Everlytic, you can customise it.

Put teaser content that supports your subject line in here to increase engagement with your email.

## From Name

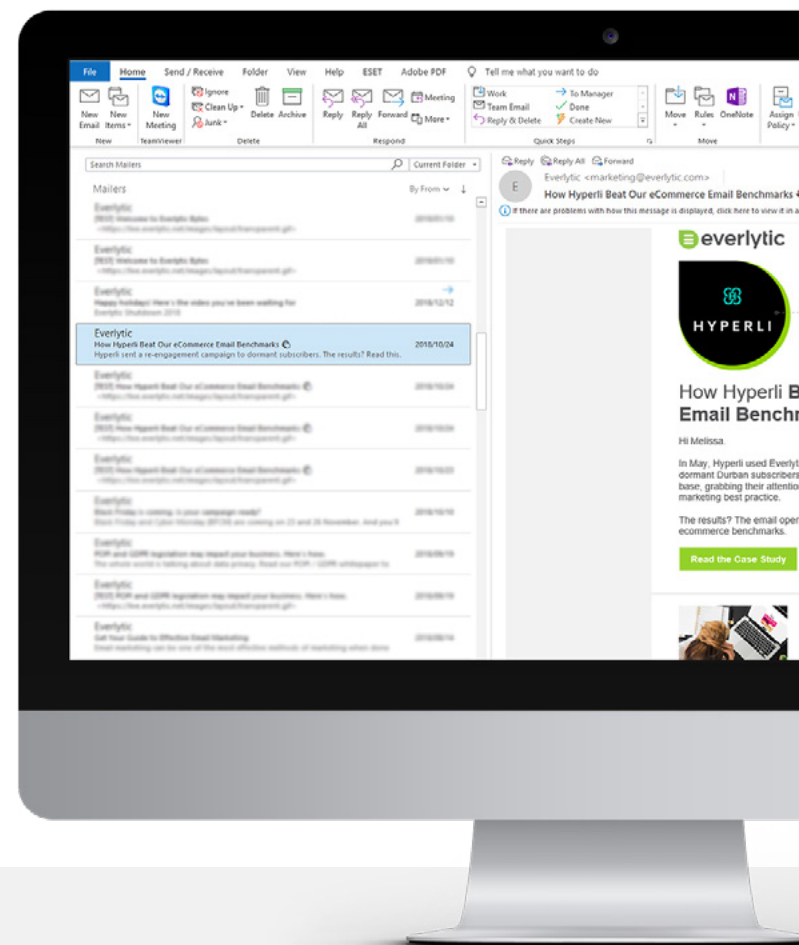
Who your email is from can impact its open rate. An email coming from a name that looks like spam may be ignored or deleted before being opened.

Try different from-name strategies, like your company name (Everlytic), the writer's full name (Candice Reeves), or a combination of the two (Candice from Everlytic).

## From Address

Having a from address that corresponds to your brand can increase reads, as it increases trust. If your contacts don't recognise your sending domain, they might assume your email is spam and delete it, unread.

Don't use a no-reply address when sending emails either, as this discourages communication. And when subscribers reply to your emails, respond to them.



Download our [Guide to Effective Email Marketing](#) for in-depth guidance on how to optimise your email for better results.

Visit us at [www.everlytic.co.za](http://www.everlytic.co.za) or [click here](#) for more information.

# Optimise Email Composition

Another vital part of improving email delivery is the content. You can improve your emails by making sure they don't look and read like junk email.

## Avoid Spam Trigger Words

These can include phrases like 'Be your own boss' and 'Free offer'. [Here's a comprehensive list you can refer to.](#)

## Control Your Use of Images

While attractive media, images, and small GIFs can increase engagement, make sure you use text too. Some experts suggest sticking with a 30 / 70 image-to-text ratio (70% text, 30% images). **Email on Acid** takes it a step further, saying that if your email has at least 500 text characters in it, content-to-image ratio doesn't affect deliverability at all.

Either way, use a healthy dose of text in your emails so email service providers don't block you and so your message is conveyed even if the recipient doesn't download images.

## Make Sure Your Data is Correct

When personalising your emails, it's critical that your data is correct and current. If not, you risk greeting the person by the wrong name, sending to the wrong address, or worse: sending someone else's personal information to the wrong person.

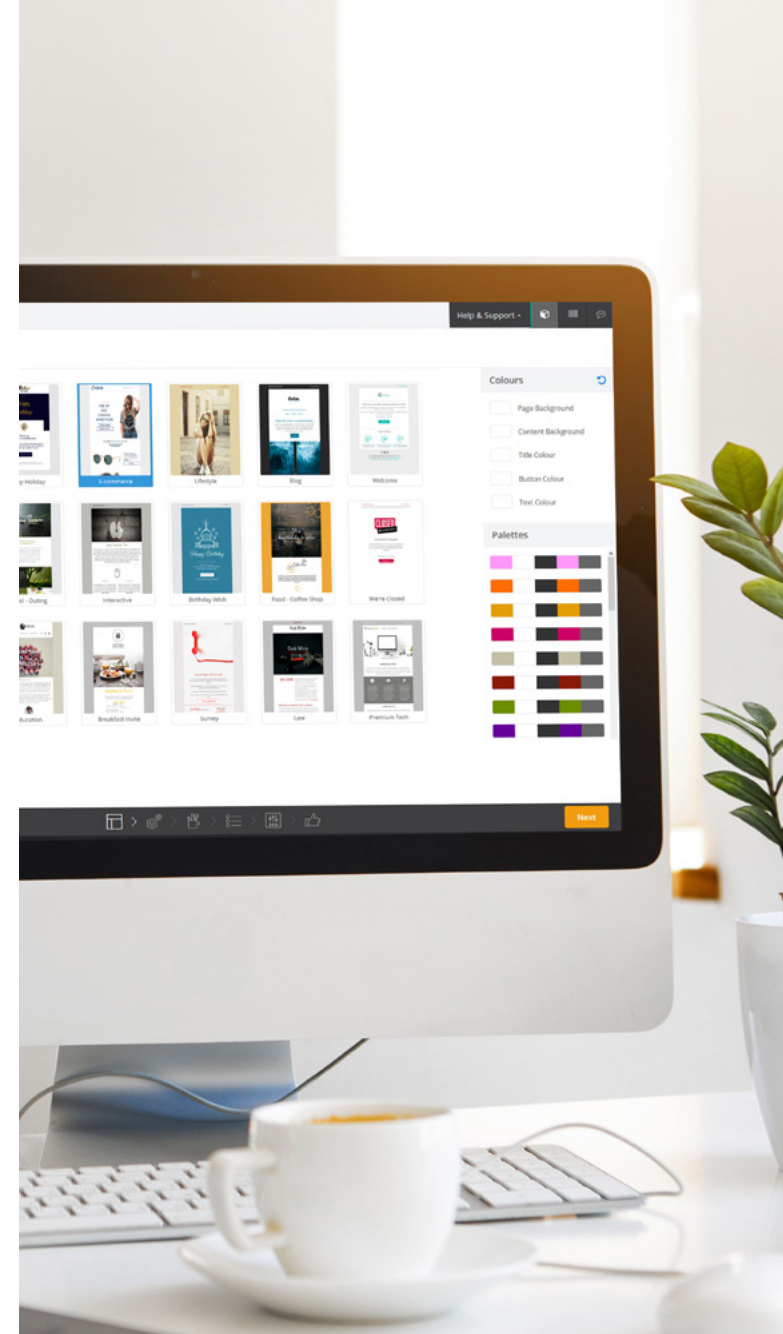
## Avoid Using Large Attachments & Embedding Images

Large email attachments and embedded images make your emails much larger, forcing subscribers to download it. In a country where internet data is precious, it increases your email's chances of getting blocked. Rather send smaller attachments and leave it to your recipients to decide if they want to download images.

## Send Emails Consistently

Choose a sending schedule and try to stick to it. Once a week works well if you're generating a lot of helpful, new content, but less frequently is better if you're not (only send if you have something valuable to say). If you send inconsistently, your subscribers may forget who you are and why they signed up to your mailing list.

If your contact list grows faster than usual, consider staggering these additional email addresses into your send list over time or sending in ever-increasing batches to avoid being flagged by the ISPs.



Everlytic's email composition tools help you compose more engaging emails, helping you boost email delivery for your business.

[Find out More](#)

Visit us at [www.everlytic.co.za](http://www.everlytic.co.za) or [click here](#) for more information.





# Test Your Emails

Testing is another important facet of improving deliverability. And with Everlytic's testing tools, you can ensure that your emails meet all the spam requirements before you send them. Further, you can experiment with subject lines, design, and content layout to see what your subscribers respond to best.

## Spam Test

Everlytic has a built-in spam test. When you run the spam test, the system will automatically evaluate the different elements in your email that contribute to a high spam score. The lower your spam score, the better.

It's also good practice to send a test to a real test list before the official send, including at least one web client and one desktop client email address (e.g.: Gmail and Outlook).

## A/B Testing

Everlytic's A/B testing (aka split testing) tool is a powerful way to test and analyse different email design and content strategies. The tool allows you to send two versions of the same email to two sample groups of contacts. Everlytic tracks the engagement statistics on each, sending the winning version to the balance of your email list.

There are many email components you can test with A/B split testing, but for improving deliverability, focus on:

### The email subject

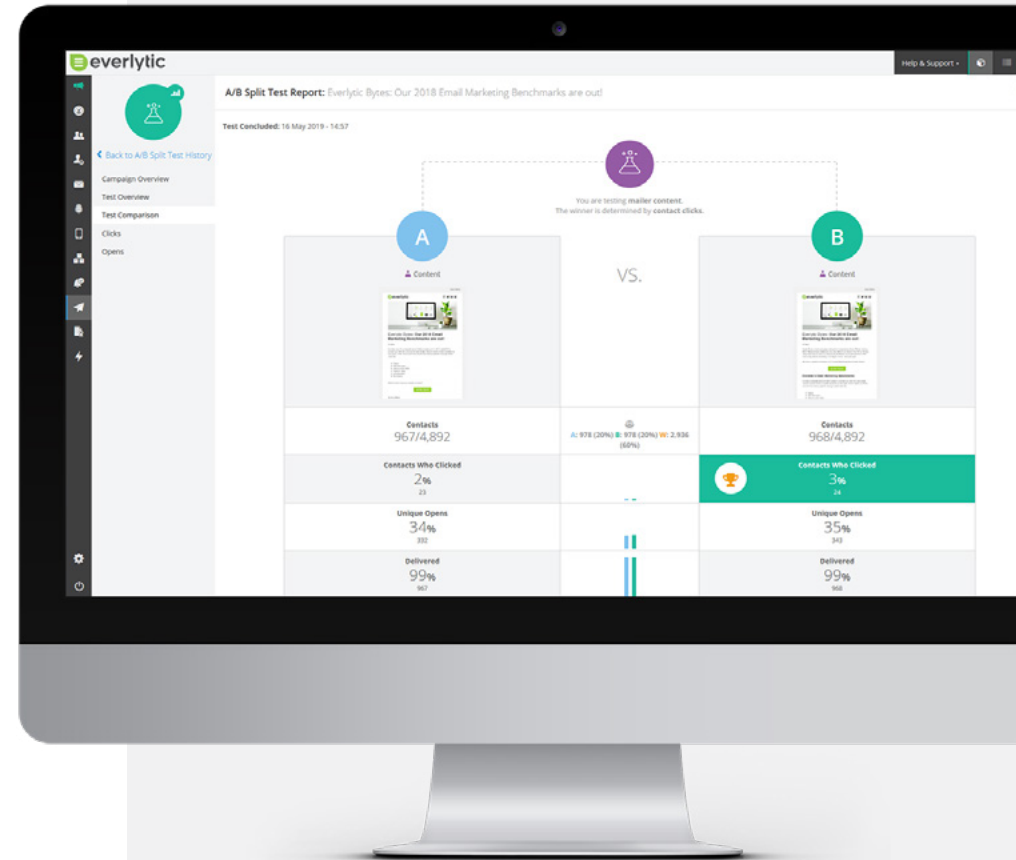
- Personalisation vs. no personalisation
- Shorter vs. longer subject lines
- Brand name in subject line

### The email graphics

- Larger vs. smaller graphics
- Photographs vs. animations

**Tip:** Test one element at a time to track which changes have an impact on your results.

Visit us at [www.everlytic.co.za](http://www.everlytic.co.za) or [click here](#) for more information.



Everlytic's A/B testing and analytics tools support your email delivery.

[Find out More](#)

# List Hygiene Tasks That Everlytic Does Automatically

Everlytic has a variety of built-in tools that automatically take care of some list hygiene tasks for you. This includes:



Not importing duplicate contacts



Deactivating unsubscribed and permanently bounced email addresses



An optional SMS-on-bounce feature that sends an SMS notification to bounced contacts (if their mobile number is in the system) to ask for a new email address. The contact can reply directly to the SMS, automatically updating the system.



Ensuring that imported email addresses are in valid email format. Anything other than the accepted format is not imported.

Proper list hygiene can be time consuming if your data is dirty, but this is precisely the reason why it needs to be done. Clean email lists perform better, giving you higher engagement rates, and a better ROI on your email marketing.

Visit us at [www.everlytic.co.za](http://www.everlytic.co.za) or [click here](#) for more information.



See how Everlytic can boost email delivery for your business.

[Find out More](#)

# Conclusion

There's so much more to delivering emails than meets the eye. Continuously monitor, test, analyse, and try the suggestions in this Guide to help your emails get to where you want them to go.

Visit us at [www.everlytic.co.za](http://www.everlytic.co.za) or [click here](#) for more information.